

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

February 11, 1999 LB 148

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. LB 148.

ASSISTANT CLERK: LB 148 was originally introduced by Senator Byars. (Read title.) The bill was read for the first time on January 7, referred to the Health and Human Services Committee. That committee reports the bill to General File with committee amendments attached. (See AM0150 found on page 470 of the Legislative Journal.)

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Chair recognizes Senator Byars to open on LB 148.

SENATOR BYARS: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. I want to spend just a few minutes talking about the technical parts of LB 148. I think every bill that's introduced to this body and goes through public hearing has those issues that statutorily we have to deal with, but once I've finished the technical part of explaining this bill to you, I hope that I will have your attention in talking to you about the other side of this bill, which I think is the most important reason for all of us to be supportive of this legislation. And that's...that's the faces behind this bill, that's the people, the lives that are affected by this bill, and I hope you'll...you'll stay with me so that I can try in some way to help you visualize what individuals in need of respite care and their caregivers are going through on a daily basis. But what is...what is respite? I think we all, in our minds, have a visual perception of what respite care is and it's fairly simple. It's a temporary short-term care to persons with special needs or for someone who is at risk of other problems, such as abuse, neglect, and so that a primary caregiver can have a few moments or a few hours relief from the demands of giving that constant care. Who are persons with special needs? I think typically in this body we think of persons with special needs as those people with disabilities. I hope you'll understand that there are many, many other people besides people with disabilities that have special needs, and this bill is noncategorical. It's intergenerational. It crosses from our very youngest members of the population in the state of Nebraska with special needs to people who are elderly with Alzheimer's and dementia and has all sorts of individuals in need in